Dynamic Mixing of TDM Data with Data Packets

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

To more fully utilize the available bandwidth of a network link, network nodes in accordance with the present invention allow TDM data to be combined with packet data. A Packet/TDM cross connect switch, having both a TDM switch and a packet switch, is used in these embodiments. Data packets are transformed into TDM packet columns. The TDM packet columns are combined with standard TDM data columns in the payload of a TDM data frame. Data packets may be sorted based on a priority scheme, in which high priority data packets are given precedence over lower priority data. However, both high priority and low priority may be combined in a TDM packet column